

Holy Cross Ranger District
24747 US Hwy 24
P.O. Box 190
Minturn, CO 81645
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United States Department of Agriculture



HIKING

WEST GROUSE CREEK TRAIL #2129

Length: 9 miles (one way)

Difficulty: More Difficult

Beginning Elevation: 7,835 ft.

Elevation Gain: +4320 ft.-1069 ft. = +3251 ft.

Trail Use: Moderate (heavy during hunting season)

Open To: Hiking, Horseback

Ending Elevation: 11,086 ft.

USGS Map(s): Minturn, Grouse Mtn

Permit Information: In order to continue to provide quality recreation experiences and to protect the wilderness lands, the Forest Service must gather data regarding visitor use and travel patterns. Each party recreating in the Holy Cross Wilderness is **required to self-register at the trailhead and to carry a copy of the registration with them** during their visit. There is no fee charged and no limit to the number of permits issued.

Access From Vail: Travel west on I-70 to exit 171 for Minturn and Highway 24. Turn right and follow Hwy 24 south for approximately 1 mile to the trailhead, which is located on the right side of the Highway. The trailhead is located across from the Meadow Mountain Business Park.

Trail Highlights: From the trailhead follow the dirt road through pastureland for approximately 1/4 mile where the road turns left. The trail begins here and continues straight before reaching a fork where the Grouse Lake Trail goes left. Stay on the right trail, which quickly enters dense stands of conifers. The trail climbs rapidly, passes Waterdog Lake at 4.5 miles, enters the Holy Cross Wilderness at mile 4.6, and passes Olsen Lake at mile 5.4. At mile 6.8, you will pass the junction with the seldom used Grouse Mountain Trail just before crossing the north ridge of Grouse Mountain. From here the trail descends to Turquoise Lakes and the headwaters of Beaver Creek.

Comments: Side trips can include Waterdog Lake, Olsen Lake, and the Grouse Mountain summit. Maps are highly encouraged, as you will be traveling off trail. Grouse Mountain offers views of the Sawatch and Gore Ranges. During the spring and summer months, wildflowers are in bloom at the many open fields and slopes that are found along the trail.

Important Information: West Grouse Creek Trail is within the **Holy Cross Wilderness**. Wilderness is for your use and enjoyment, but you have an obligation to leave it unimpaired for future generations. Please understand your responsibilities when visiting these special places. Leave them as you wish to Find them:

- * Camping - camp at least 100 feet from streams, lakes, and trails
- * Dogs - must be leashed out of consideration for both other people and wildlife
- * Fire - campstoves are recommended and fires are prohibited at and above timberline
- * Group size - limit group sizes to 15 people
- * Sanitation - bury human waste 100 feet from water and 6 inches in the soil

PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT!! LEAVE NO TRACE!!

This map is intended for use as a general guide only, not for actual land navigation. The White River National Forest strongly suggests purchasing a topographic map and compass prior to your hiking trip.

